
The Plumas National Forest

Feather River Ranger District

Magalia Fire Salvage Project

Biological Evaluation

Forest Service Species of Concern

Management Indicator Species Report

Migratory Bird Species Report

May 6, 2019

LOCATION: Coutolenc Road and Lucretia Road T23N, R4E, Sections 18, 24, 30; Paradise East California 7.5-minute topographic quadrangle

ELEVATION: 2,300 feet

PROJECTS Total ACRES: 178

PROJECT DURATION: Summer 2019

MAP: Appendix E Figure 1

SUMMARY

Species Determination: will not affect species.

Species occurring in the vicinity:

- Bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*)

Salvage will not occur around the Magalia reservoir, within bald eagle nesting, roosting or foraging areas.

Protection measures: Stream Buffers (see below or Management Table).

INTRODUCTION

The Feather River Ranger District (FRRD) on the Plumas National Forest (PNF) is proposing to remove tree mortality that as occurred in areas of high and mixed fire severity off the Coutolenc Road and Lucretia Road around Paradise Lake, in Butte County. The Campfire began on November 8 - 25, 2018 and burned 153,336 acres through November 25, when it was 100% contained. Of the fire burned acres 32, 313 are on Forest Service land.

This Biological Evaluation (BE) is prepared to determine whether the proposed action will result in a trend toward listing or loss of viability for Forest Service Sensitive Species, Management Indicator Species and/or Migratory Bird Species.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PURPOSE AND NEED

Purpose and need

The dead and dying trees present an imminent safety hazard. Salvage is primarily along roadsides in areas between and along Coutolenc Road and Lucretia Road around Paradise Lake where it burned in high and mixed fire severity. The Forest service proposes to log the trees that have died, will die and were skinned up severely in dozer line operations.

Proposed Action

The proposed area is of mixed conifer species: ponderosa pine, white fir, incense cedar, and sugar pine. Douglas-fir, madrone, tan-oak, and black-oak. Conventional or mechanical tractor logging practices will be used to salvage trees in the spring of 2019. Re-entry may occur within the project foot print for up to 3 years in order to remove trees deemed dangerous to the public.

Approximately 2-3 years after harvest a combination of natural regeneration and plantings would be used to achieve desired stocking levels of new stands dominated by shade-intolerant fire-resilient species (such as ponderosa pine, Douglas-fir, black oak, and sugar pine). Additional work includes removing any additional danger trees for additional volume.

RESTORATION ACTIVITIES

The proposal also includes reforestation and maintenance activities to include: site preparation which can include bio-massing, hand-cutting, hand- or grapple-piling and pile burning; planting; grubbing after planting; and a variety of maintenance activities including mastication, hand-cut and hand- or grapple-pile, pile burning, prescribed fire, and targeted grazing. Maintenance could be needed for a period of 40 or more years. Planting could consist of conifer or hardwood species or some combination that is appropriate for future climatic conditions.

The fire exposed a large, open, abandoned mining shaft that presents a hazard to the public and the administration of the forest. We propose to close the shaft by backfilling it with a spoils pile located nearby using an excavator. If the spoils pile cannot be used, material will have to be hauled in from off site.

Due to the Campfire an ephemeral stream is diverted down an old railroad grade for approximately 4,815 feet and enters an intermittent stream on private property. We propose to

divert the stream flow back to the streams original channel by adding 4 armored dips and 3 low water crossings to resolve the hydro-connectivity issue. A 24 inch culvert is needed to replace an undersized culvert. Other drainage features may be constructed if conditions worsen.

An unclassified road segment is causing resource damages to soils and water. To restore proper function we propose to rip the road surface, add slash, chipped biomass, and/or weed-free straw for effective soil cover. We would also remove a culvert and construct 3 armored low water crossings. A nearby skid trail is adding sediment to the unclassified road segment. We would add a water-bar to resolve.

SPECIES CONSIDERED

Forest Service Sensitive Species

Bald eagles occur at the Magalia Reservoir.

Refer to **Appendix A** for a list of all species that were considered but did not occur within the project.

Appendices A, B, and C contains a list of Threatened, Endangered, Proposed, Candidate and Sensitive species, Management Indicator Species and Migratory Birds.

MANAGEMENT DIRECTION

Decision Framework

- Code of Federal Regulations (36&50CFR)
- Forest Service Manual and Handbooks (FSM/H 2670)
- National Forest Management Act (NFMA: 1976)
- Endangered Species Act (ESA: 1976)
- National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA: 1969)
- Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918 as amended (MBTA)
- Plumas National Forest Land and Resource Plan (LRMP: 1988)
- Sierra Nevada Forest Plan Amendment FSEIS and ROD (SNFPA: 2004)
- Regional Forester policy and management direct

Stream Protect Measures

Riparian conservation area widths were adjusted at the project level and are site-specific.

- Heavy equipment is restricted from use within a 100-foot from perennial or intermittent streams and 25-feet from ephemeral.
- Maintenance activities (e.g., hand-cut and pile < 10" trees, prescribed burns) are allowed within a 100-foot stream buffer (perennial or intermittent) and 25-feet ephemeral creeks.

EXISTING ENVIRONMENT AND EFFECTS

Analysis Area

Due to the extreme fire behavior in the surrounding location the 178-acre salvage, is the analysis area.

Field Reconnaissance

The location of the salvage and surround area had been surveyed under the Flea Project in 2005 and 2006. Due to the Butte Lightning Complex (BLC) fire of 2008, the Flea Project was preempted by the Concow Hazardous Fuel Reduction Project. The Campfire burned over areas of the BLC fire, which had also exhibited extreme fire behavior resulting in high vegetative and tree mortality.

DETERMINATION OF EFFECTS

Wildlife suffered a substantial losses due to habitat alteration and destruction from the wildfire. Animals in the path of the fire were either killed or displaced. Displaced wildlife will head toward areas not affected by the fire. It is my determination that listed Forest Service Sensitive Species, Management Indicator Species, and Migratory bird species will not be affected by the removal of fire affected trees during salvage activities. Refer to Appendix A, B, and C for a species lists.

Biological Evaluation was prepared by Jo Anna Arroyo, wildlife biologist.
Feather River Ranger District, Oroville California.

Literature Cited

Sierra Nevada Forest Plan Amendment, Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement ROD 2004.

U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service [USDA FS]. 2004. Sierra Nevada Forest Plan Amendment: final supplemental environmental impact statement. San Francisco, CA: Pacific Southwest Region.

USDA Forest Service 1988. Plumas National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan and Final Environmental Impact Statement. Pacific Southwest Region, San Francisco, CA.

APPENDIX A

Threatened, Endangered, Proposed, Candidate and Forest Service Sensitive Species that potentially occur on the Plumas National Forest and determinations

Threatened, Endangered and Sensitive Species (Scientific Name)	Species Status*	Habitat or Ecosystem Component	Category for Project Analysis**	Determinations
Invertebrates				
Valley elderberry longhorn beetle (<i>Desmocerus californicus dimorphus</i>)	FT	Elderberry trees (<i>Sambucus</i> spp.)	1	WNA
Fish				
Hardhead minnow (<i>Mylopharodon conocephalus</i>)	USFS : S	Riverine and Lacustrine	1	WNA
Amphibians				
California red-legged frog (<i>Rana aurora draytonii</i>)	FT	Riverine and Lacustrine	1	Refer to Biological Assessment
Foothill yellow-legged frog (<i>Rana boylei</i>)	USFS : S, DFG : SSC	Riverine and Lacustrine	1	WNA
Sierra (Mountain) yellow-legged frog (<i>Rana sierrae</i>)	FE, USFS : S, DFG : SSC	Riverine and Lacustrine	1	WNA
Northern leopard frog (<i>Rana pipiens</i>)	USFS : S, DFG : SSC	Riverine and Lacustrine	1	WNA
Reptiles				
Northwestern pond turtle (<i>Clemmys marmorata marmorata</i>)	USFS : S, DFG : SSC	Riverine and Lacustrine	1	Refer to Biological Assessment
Birds				
Bald eagle (<i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>)	USFS : S, SE, USFWS : BCC	Large trees adjacent to riverine and lacustrine	1	WNA
California spotted owl (<i>Strix occidentalis occidentalis</i>)	USFS : S, USFS : MIS, DFG : SSC, USFWS : BCC	Late Seral Closed Canopy Coniferous Forest	1	WNA
Greater sandhill crane (<i>Grus canadensis tabida</i>)	USFS : S, ST	Prefers open habitats (grasslands and croplands) with shallow lakes and fresh emergent wetlands	1	WNA
Great gray owl (<i>Strix nebulosa</i>)	USFS : S, SE	Late Seral Closed Canopy Coniferous Forest adjacent to wet meadows	1	WNA
Northern goshawk (<i>Accipiter gentilis</i>)	USFS : S, DFG : SSC	Late Seral Closed Canopy Coniferous Forest	1	WNA

Threatened, Endangered and Sensitive Species (Scientific Name)	Species Status*	Habitat or Ecosystem Component	Category for Project Analysis**	Determinations
Swainson's hawk (<i>Buteo swainsoni</i>)	USFS : S, DFG : SSC	Open desert, grassland or cropland containing scattered, large trees or small groves	1	WNA
Willow flycatcher (<i>Empidonax trailii brewsteri</i>)	USFS : S, SE, USFWS : BCC	Riparian with dense willows	1	WNA
Mammals				
American marten (<i>Martes americana</i>)	USFS : S	Late Seral Closed Canopy Coniferous Forest	1	WNA
California wolverine (<i>Gulo gulo luteus</i>)	USFS : S, ST	Late Seral Closed Canopy Coniferous Forest	1	WNA
Pacific fisher (<i>Martes pennanti pacifica</i>)	FC, USFS : S, DFG : SSC	Late Seral Closed Canopy Coniferous Forest	1	Refer to Biological Assessment
Pallid bat (<i>Antrozous pallidus</i>)	USFS : S, DFG : SSC	Most common in open, dry habitats with rocky areas (rocky outcrops, cliffs and crevices)	1	WNA
Sierra Nevada red fox (<i>Vulpes vulpes necator</i>)	USFS : S, ST	Late Seral Closed Canopy Coniferous Forest	1	WNA
Townsend's big-eared bat (<i>Corynorhinus townsendii</i>)	USFS : S, DFG : SSC	Mesic Habitats	1	WNA
Fringe-tailed myotis (<i>Myotis thysanods</i>)	USFS-S	Sangs, caves, mines, crevices in rocks. Nearby water. Oaks and pinyon woodlands	1	WNA
Invertebrates				
Bumble bee (<i>Bombus occidentalis</i>)	USFS-S	Its short proboscis limits flower species with short corolla lengths	1	WNA

***Species Status:** FE = Federal Endangered, FT = Federal Threatened, FP = Federal Proposed, FC = Federal Candidate, USFS: S = U.S. Forest Service - Sensitive, USFS: MIS = U.S. Forest Service – Management Indicator Species, SE = State Endangered, ST = State Threatened, DFG: FP = State Fully Protected, DFG: SSC = State Species of Special Concern, USFWS: BCC = U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service Birds of Conservation Concern, SOI = Species of Interest.

** **Category 1:** Species whose habitat is not in or adjacent to the wildlife analysis area and would not be affected by the project.

Category 2: Species whose habitat is in or adjacent to the wildlife analysis area, but would not be either directly or indirectly affected by the project. **Category 3:** Species whose habitat would be either directly or indirectly affected by the project.

***Determinations:** T, E & P Species: WNA = Will Not Affect, MAINLA = May Affect but Is Not Likely to Adversely Affect Individuals or their designated critical habitat, MAILAA = May Affect and Is Likely to Adversely Affect Individuals or their designated critical habitat.

FS Sensitive Species: WNA = Will Not Affect, MAI = May Affect Individuals, but is not likely to result in a trend toward Federal listing or loss of viability, MAILRTFL = May Affect Individuals, and is Likely to Result in a Trend toward Federal Listing or loss of viability.

APPENDIX B

Selection of MIS for Project-Level Habitat Analysis

Habitat or Ecosystem Component	CWHR Type(s) defining the habitat or ecosystem component*	Sierra Nevada Forests Management Indicator Species (Scientific Name)	Species Status**	Category for Project Analysis ***
Early Seral Coniferous Forest	Douglas-fir (DFR), Eastside Pine (EPN), Jeffrey Pine (JPN), Lodgepole Pine (LPN), Ponderosa Pine (PPN), Red Fir (RFR), Sierran Mixed Conifer (SMC), Subalpine Conifer (SCN), White Fir (WFR), tree sizes 1, 2, & 3, all canopy closures	Mountain quail (<i>Oreortyx pictus</i>)	USFS : MIS	1
Mid Seral Coniferous Forest	Douglas-fir (DFR), Eastside Pine (EPN), Jeffrey Pine (JPN), Lodgepole Pine (LPN), Ponderosa Pine (PPN), Red Fir (RFR), Sierran Mixed Conifer (SMC), Subalpine Conifer (SCN), White Fir (WFR), tree size 4, all canopy closures	Mountain quail (<i>Oreortyx pictus</i>)	USFS : MIS	1
Late Seral Open Canopy Coniferous Forest	Douglas-fir (DFR), Eastside Pine (EPN), Jeffrey Pine (JPN), Lodgepole Pine (LPN), Ponderosa Pine (PPN), Red Fir (RFR), Sierran Mixed Conifer (SMC), Subalpine Conifer (SCN), White Fir (WFR), tree size 5, canopy closures S and P	Sooty grouse (<i>Dendragapus obscurus</i>)	USFS : MIS	1
Late Seral Closed Canopy Coniferous Forest	Douglas-fir (DFR), Eastside Pine (EPN), Jeffrey Pine (JPN), Lodgepole Pine (LPN), Ponderosa Pine (PPN), Red Fir (RFR), Sierran Mixed Conifer (SMC), Subalpine Conifer (SCN), White Fir (WFR), tree size 5 (canopy closures M and D), and tree size 6.	California spotted owl (<i>Strix occidentalis occidentalis</i>)	USFS : S, USFS : MIS, DFG : SSC, USFWS : BCC	1
		Northern flying squirrel (<i>Glaucomys sabrinus</i>)	USFS : MIS	
Oak-associated Hardwood & Hardwood/conifer	Montane Hardwood (MHW), Montane Hardwood-Conifer (MHC)	Mule deer (<i>Odocoileus hemionus</i>)	USFS : MIS	1
Riparian	Montane Riparian (MRI), Valley Foothill Riparian (VRI)	Yellow warbler (<i>Dendroica petechia</i>)	USFS : MIS, DFG : SSC	1
Riverine & Lacustrine	Riverine (RIV), Lacustrine (LAC)	Aquatic macroinvertebrates	USFS : MIS	1
Shrubland (west-slope chaparral types)	Montane Chaparral (MCP), Mixed Chaparral (MCH), Chamise-Redshank Chaparral (CRC)	Fox sparrow (<i>Passerella iliaca</i>)	USFS : MIS	1

Habitat or Ecosystem Component	CWHR Type(s) defining the habitat or ecosystem component*	Sierra Nevada Forests Management Indicator Species (Scientific Name)	Species Status**	Category for Project Analysis ***
Snags in Burned Forest	Medium and large snags in burned forest (stand-replacing fire)	Black-backed woodpecker (<i>Picoides arcticus</i>)	USFS : MIS	1
Snags in Green Forest	Medium and large snags in green forest	Hairy woodpecker (<i>Picoides villosus</i>)	USFS : MIS	1
Wet Meadow	Wet Meadow (WTM), Freshwater Emergent Wetland (FEW)	Pacific chorus frog (<i>Pseudacris regilla</i>)	USFS : MIS	1

*All CWHR size classes and canopy closures are included unless otherwise specified; dbh = diameter at breast height;

1 = Seedling Tree <1" dbh, **2** = Sapling Tree 1 - 6" dbh, **3** = Pole Tree 6 - 11" dbh, **4** = Small Tree 11 - 24" dbh, **5** = Medium/Large Tree >24" dbh, **6** = Multi-layered Tree. **D** = Dense Canopy Cover (> 60%), **M** = Moderate Canopy Cover (40 - 59%), **P** = Open Canopy Cover (25 - 39%), **S** = Sparse Canopy Cover (10 - 24%) (Mayer and Laudenslayer 1988).

****Species Status:** **FE** = Federal Endangered, **FT** = Federal Threatened, **FP** = Federal Proposed, **FC** = Federal Candidate,

USFS: S = U.S. Forest Service - Sensitive, **USFS: MIS** = U.S. Forest Service - Management Indicator Species, **SE** = State Endangered,

ST = State Threatened, **DFG: FP** = State Fully Protected, **DFG: SSC** = State Species of Special Concern,

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APPENDIX C

Analysis of Migratory Birds

Birds of Conservation Concern (Sierra Nevada - BCR 15) Species (Scientific Name)	Species Status*	Forest Service Sensitive Species (S) or Management Indicator Species (MIS)	Project Level Report (BA/BE or MIS)	Critical Habitat component or threat as defined by Sierra Nevada Bird Conservation Plan (PIF)	Category for Project Analysis**
American peregrine falcon (<i>Falco peregrinus anatum</i>)	SE, USFWS : BCC	See Below	N/A	Bodies of water in open areas with protected cliffs, canyons and ledges for cover and nesting	1
Bald eagle (<i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>)	USFS : S, SE, USFWS : BCC	Bald Eagle (S)	BE	Designated as a non-land bird by DeSante	1
Black swift (<i>Cypseloides niger</i>)	USFWS : BCC	See Below	N/A	Wet cliff, waterfalls	1
California spotted owl (<i>Strix occidentalis occidentalis</i>)	USFS : S, USFS : MIS, DFG : SSC, USFWS : BCC	California Spotted Owl (S)	BE	Depends critically on old growth	1
Calliope Hummingbird (<i>Stellula calliope</i>)	USFWS : BCC	Sooty (Blue) Grouse (MIS) Yellow Warbler (MIS) Willow Flycatcher (S)	MIS MIS BE	Open Forested habitats, and moist habitats on the East Slope	1
Cassin's Finch (<i>Carpodacus cassinii</i>)	USFWS : BCC	California Spotted Owl (S)	BE	Depends critically on old growth	1
Flammulated Owl (<i>Otis flammeolus</i>)	USFWS : BCC	Mule Deer (MIS) Hairy Woodpecker (MIS)	MIS MIS	Depends critically on oaks or oak woodlands, Loss of snags	1
Lewis' woodpecker (<i>Melanerpes lewis</i>)	USFWS : BCC	Hairy Woodpecker (MIS)	MIS	Loss of snags	1
Olive-sided flycatcher (<i>Contopus cooperi</i>)	DFG : SSC, USFWS : BCC	California Spotted Owl (S) Hairy Woodpecker (MIS)	BE MIS	Utilize late successional/old growth forest, but does not depend on it critically, Loss of snags	1
Williamson's sapsucker (<i>Sphyrapicus thyroideus</i>)	USFWS : BCC	Hairy Woodpecker (MIS)	MIS	Loss of snags	1
Willow flycatcher (<i>Empidonax traillii brewsteri</i>)	USFS : S, SE, USFWS : BCC	Willow Flycatcher (S)	BE	Depends critically on montane meadow habitat	1

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APPENDIX E

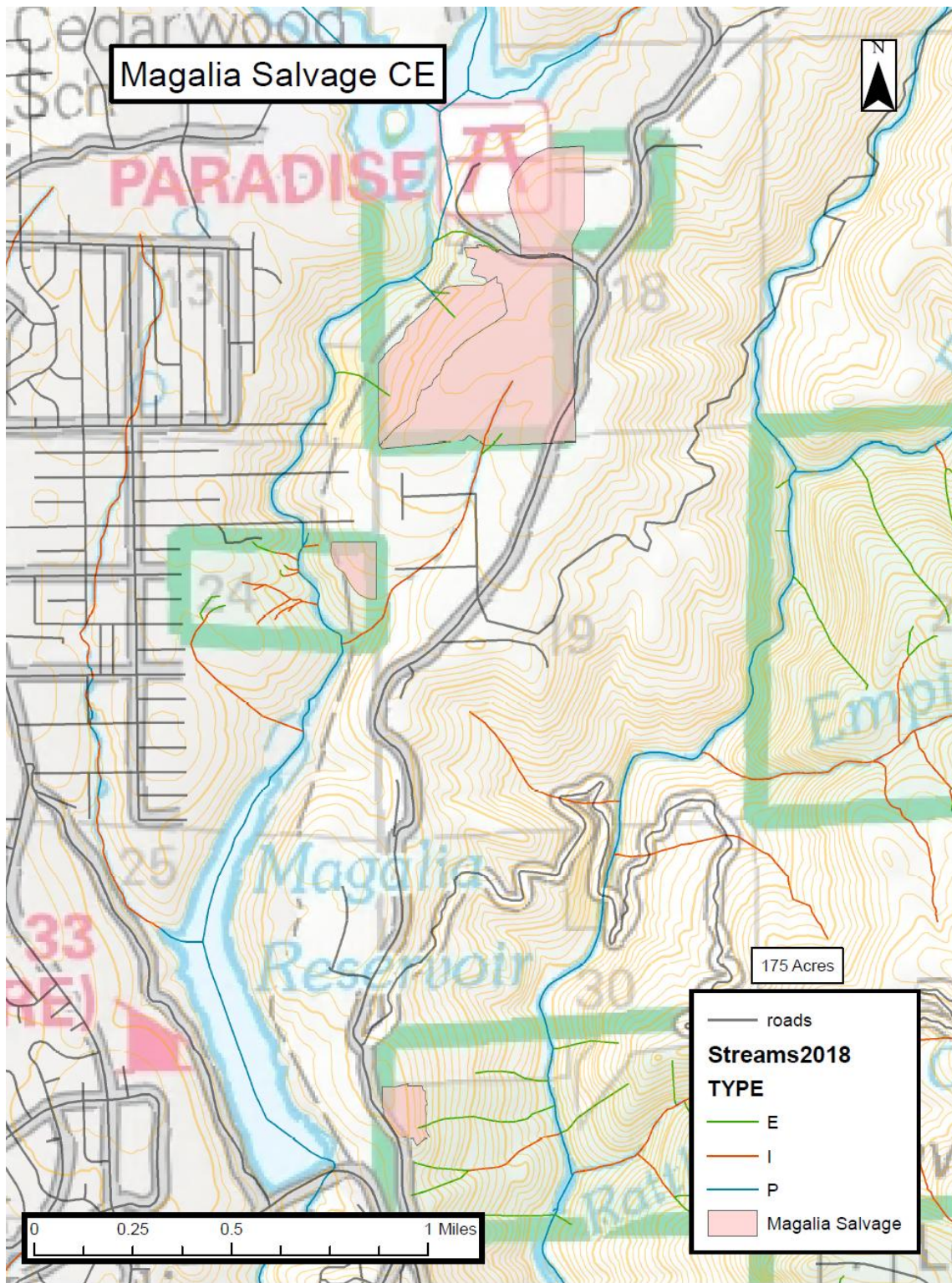


Figure 1. Concow Fire Salvage Project units and stream locations.
